

# IN SEARCH OF NOAH'S ARK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ALLAN ROBERTS

by Reinhard Stark

"..history and archaeology are already being challenged, because what we are finding is the further we go back the more sophisticated things appear to be, which is really rather contrary to our beliefs of history."

The validity of the Bible seems to be making a popular comeback of late. Apart from the interesting correlations between the Book of Revelations and today's times, story of Noah's Ark has raised it's head again, and not for the last time, if the findings of Dr. Allan Roberts are anything to go by.

Dr. Allan Roberts was part of an international expedition of 12 or so people, examining the remains of what appear to be an ancient vessel. The expedition made local headlines in Australia, when the members were kidnapped by local Kurds, who appeared to only want international recognition.

Ironically, the kidnapping only served to highlight the extraordinary findings of the team.

Most popular stories about the Ark place it on Mount Arrarat in Turkey, but the remains being studied, actually fall on part of the surrounding mountains instead.

The area is known as "Akyayla", which literally means 'high white plateau', and can be found in the province of Agri, not far from Dogubayazit, near the village of Uzengilli. The place where the remains can be found is known as the "Duripinar Site".

What follows is extracted from an interview with Dr. Roberts by Reinhard Stark.

As I approached Dr. Allan Roberts' home set in the beautiful leafy suburb of Castle Hill, west of Sydney, an unfamiliar piano melody was being played from within. The music stopped abruptly as I knocked on the flyscreen door and heard wide gated foot-steps motion towards me from an adjacent room.

I looked up through the screen door and saw a tall, grey-white bearded man. (It's Noah!) If indeed Noah was tall, the face of this man showed a deep sense of awe in knowledge and wisdom himself, befitting him as a world traveller, historian and lecturer.

Inviting me inside, Allan Roberts greeted me with a warm friendly smile and handshake, we then seated ourselves in the adjacent room where the piano, I previously heard, was played and mentioned that it was one of his relaxing pastimes in between writing for his two upcoming books.

**RS:** *When were you first interested in the ark? Why did you start searching for it?*

**AR:** Well everybody was interested in the Ark. It's universally known, and I guess a loved story by adults and children alike, and happens to be a dominant story in the western world. It's not only an account in the old testament, but is also recorded other places such as the Epic of Gilgamesh, and various tribal accounts with some legends recorded even earlier on. Of course everyone knew about it and I was one of those people who was fascinated from the historical point of view since very early on.

The Akyayla Site, proclaimed to be discovered approximately 30 years ago. When I was a young historian I read an account in some magazines about a group from America who examined a boat shaped object they thought to be Noah's Ark. They went and checked it, and very roughly knew it was there, decided that because it was underneath the mud, they would use dynamite to get at it. They blew a big hole in the side and because wood didn't come out they designated it a natural formation. So that was a non gentle method and a fairly inadequate determination wasn't it(?), in the light of the evidence that they thought they had. Anyway that was one of the first visits.

The local people knew about it, came up in '48 as a result of an earthquake. It soon hit the news, and spread pretty widely I believe it was syndicated through Time-Life magazine in or about 1960.

I was particularly interested then because the descriptions given in the scripture's, details specific information of the kind an archeologist needs, and one of them of course was the size of the Ark. This is given quite specifically in cubits as you know.

**RS:** *A cubit being?*

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**AR:** A cubit being an ancient measure which is a varying size that in the sense that there were several of them. Piazzi Smith of last century, who measured the Great pyramid, quite compellingly found the ancient 20.6 inch egyptian cubit to be the standard throughout the mediterranean area and so we adopted it. That being the case then all one had to do is take the bible measurements (and disregard the other cubits that we couldn't interface with) and it (20.6 inches) became consistent in the end. We've multiplied 300 (Noah's Ark cubits) by 20.6, divided by 12 inches to give it in feet in length (515' which we've found) and have done the same for all dimensions, breadth and height.

I was interested in biblical times, and particularly interested when I read the article, because it was claimed that this boat shaped formation was roughly the size of the Ark described in the scriptures, and I had longing to see it. But its not always easy for various reasons, the political one being its a very dangerous of course being on the border of Soviet Russia, Iran and Iraq. You couldn't get a much 'hotter' spot than where it is.

But it was when I teamed up with Ron White, and we did more research on the site, that we really started to move ahead. Ron had been there several times before me and has worked closely with the Turkish government and has set up a Commission with them. They are very efficient when it comes to archaeology and geology.

**RS:** *You mentioned before that they have a lot of archeological sites there!*

**AR:** Yes, about 80,000 of them. One of the richest countries in the world for archaeological sites..

**RS:** *Are there any other significant sites such as the "boat shaped object?"*

**AR:** I don't know of any other that are as unique as this one but they have classified this one as one of major importance. It is classed in the highest category of archaeological sites in Turkey. They [the Turks] have gone a lot further than than we have with their research, but we don't have all the information that they have gotten from the site, and they haven't yet made all their findings public.

**RS:** *Why do you think that is?*

**AR:** Like any Commission, they,are not going to make it public until they have all their materials properly ratified and of course until they want to move on it. We've just got to be patient and move when they want to. We have a good relationship with the Commission, so we are encouraged and aided, to do it soon, because the object is deteriorating from being exposed to the elements. It's really very sad to see it decaying. You see, it's covered in mud, as well as being full of mud inside the ship, which of course is made of wood, now petrified wood.

**RS:** *So how far down under the mud is it?*

**AR:** Well we don't know. There have been some recordings taken, but I don't have the the exact measurements of those taken by the Turkish government. But the walls, or the hull, projects up over the surface of the mud barrier, standing up quite clearly. The size is quite remarkable, measured at 515 feet in length. The width is greater then it ought to be, according to the scriptural measure-

ments, but then again, it's been buried in mud for a very long time, and there has been a heavy burden on top, causing it to splay somewhat, which is quite consistent with what we can see with the particular dimensions we've read there.

The height is pretty well gone as it's been squashed out flat, but it's a hull as you can see, and is quite intact. You have a bow as you can see [referring to photos], a stern, and gammels. But the most interesting thing was what we found underneath using our sonar. It appears there are buttrage divisions running across and down to the centre and the bulkheads, but we haven't fully finished the readings there.

**RS:** *How long were you on the site?*

**AR:** Oh, I've been there a number of times now, but there has been a lot of work done at the site before our team got there. I wasn't there on the particular occasion that the famous astronaut James Irwin was there, but on that occasion some terrorists opened fire upon the team and several members were killed, so their work wasn't fully finished.

Inside, the shapes that you see there - the columns, we suspected that they might be actual ribs, so we removed a little bit of the veneer which is quite thin on the port side that covers the column shapes, and we found that they were parallel stone shapes, all fossilised now.

I think, we have pretty sound evidence. Underneath you have the major structure you would expect find in such a vessel, bulkheads and ribs. We also found using, powerful metal detectors, that we got some bleeps walking down the slope from aft to stern. Those bleeps came at regular intervals which shows some metal substance underneath. This might have been used for joinings of some sort and so what was done on that occasion, was the team decided to leave tapes on the regular intervals (as markers) and those tapes are very interesting because it qualified the divisions or walls or whatever you want to call them, bulkheads.

Bulkheads run transversely, these were running down the ship. Now you put all that together and what you got is ROOMS! or compartments. And we think without much doubt this is what is underneath. Now it's interesting that the Genesis account, apart from the other details, says "rooms shalt they make too within the Ark". It talks about decks, so of course we were not sure yet but with further research we may find evidence. The Bible also says that there is a door, and we're about to let light on that. We believe we're going to establish where it is and what it is, in detail.

You know people are assuming that the people who built this boat were some sort of 'cave man', well it's obvious that a ship of this size, the largest ship made of wood EVER in history, couldn't have possibly been built by them!

**RS:** *You think definitely the wood has become petrified?*

**AR:** Well we've found lots of petrified wood, and it is not even large scale digging at this point. A few years ago, the governor of Agri, (pronounced ar-ee), was on site with many other dignitaries, and declared it a National Site. Ron White, using information he gleaned from his sonar research, said to the governor "Your Excellency..", (they call them that over there), "down here pre-

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cisely where we've marked, is petrified wood. Its broken and appears to be a long section of deck timber". So they dug, in front of the governor, it was a public event, on TV etc, and up came a piece of wood, approximately two feet by one and a half feet. It was very heavily laminated actually, and we've identified it botanically as "peti-cyprus". Of course that's not gopher wood, but we think gopher means 'laminated', used for boats ever since of course, we all know its got great advantages; so its a large piece of laminated timber. We found other pieces as well, some of which appears to be hand worked timber. I believe when we dig, we will find more of the fossilized structures of the "great boat".

One of the most interesting things when it comes to the Ark of Noah as recorded in in history, and in the scriptures in particular, is that it had a range of animals sufficient to repopulate the earth again. So zoologically speaking we're looking for evidence of some sort of a range of animals on the site. We've had one chance to look inside.

**RS:** *Is it hollow?*

**AR:** What I mean is we've been taking core samples, because it's all caved in with mud, and we have found animal hair inside.

**RS:** *Has this been identified?*

**AR:** No, its work in progress. I did some work on it just this year, on identifying it. We've also found animal dung which will be most interesting to identify as well.

**RS:** *Has it been carbon dated?*

**AR:** Well, we don't hold carbon dating as accurate. It has been questioned by people today who are using it. I could provide documentation to show you that there's a great deal of, disenchantment shall I say, with radio-carbon dating. It has been pushed hard because everyone says it's so wonderful. However for those who want to know it's 5,700 years old using the radio-carbon method, which is marginal for the 4-5,000 years we're looking at. We'll be using isotope of hydrogen as a modern and accurate dating method.

**RS:** *What about the petrified wood itself, surely you can determine how long it takes to form?*

**AR:** I don't have any specific knowledge on how long petrification takes place, but I know it can happen very quickly. For example I did some research on the south coast at Coalcliff some time ago with a geologist. With our geologist's hammer, we examined some old abandoned jetty pylons and which some, over the years, have fallen apart, a real hazard for children, excuse the story but it will serve its point with evidence. It showed it was lightly petrified and rang like a bell when struck, which is 30-40-50 years old, they sawed the wooden pylon off and drilled through the middle where there's iron, which was used right down to the bedrock, very strong. Now when they've cut through horizontally they've found the iron in the middle has naturally rusted, in the process of petrification and chemical leaching of the iron has diffused outwards, a process called ironization as well as petrification.

We found a lot of the ribs were ironized, in other words the structure adjacent to them has diffused through it, and so here we have a curious situation where things we can't even see are picked

up by metal detectors, once wood, now ironized.

**RS:** *So what do you think about the flood theory and the theory of evolution?*

**AR:** Most people have got the theory of evolution stuck in their minds, a theory which is really in tatters now. Scientists are saying all over the world "good gracious haven't we solved that part". I'm not simply doing that by having a christian view, I'm simply saying that the whole theory is now in shambles, it really is. This idea that everything takes millions of years is astonishing. Let me give you an example. This is relative to the flood. When I stand up on top of the Blue Mountains or, as I've done, on the Grand Canyon, and I look down at the valley; I can stand there and say one of two things. Charles Darwin might have stood there and said "that little river down there would have taken millions of years to carve out this great valley". See what he's doing? A little bit of water over a long time has carved out the valley. I can stand on the same crevasse and postulate that a lot of water (from "the flood") has carved out that same valley in a short period of time!

I've examined Darwin's theory carefully and believe it's a theory that's falling to pieces, I think its time we started to look at some other answers. I don't think we need millions of years to explain what has happened, I think things happened very quickly within a much shorter time frame, 4-5,000 years ago, ok there was a flood there, may have covered the entire world. Let's not fool about, let's take the account and test it! Test if it was a flood that covered the entire world and there was a boat that was big enough to be a floating zoo. Okay, you're looking at a big boat on a mountain, let's face it it's 2000 metres above sea level, and there is a boat that's as big as a battle ship, how do you explain that?

Across the mud valley from the site, there is a volcano, the biggest volcano in the area, that is the famous Mt. Ararat. It is 17,000 feet or 5,000 metres high, and is covered with what's called pillow lava. Pillow lava is only hardened underwater! Again you have a likely evidence of a flood!

**RS:** *What are the implications of theology, archaeology and science of your discovery?*

**AR:** First of all it represents a challenge to science, of whether the earth was indeed flooded, a major flood, 4-5,000 years ago! There are questions raised about the science of the iron age and the bronze age. All of those things we find on the site indicates, a high degree of sophistication metallurgically, which is a challenge for our knowledge today. I think that type of discovery is a very very major issue of debate, which must happen and that's healthy, I'm all for it.

As for history and archaeology together undoubtedly they are already being challenged, because what we are finding is the further we go back the more sophisticated things appear to be which is really rather contrary to our beliefs of history.

If you had found some of the things we've found already, you would also be challenged as WE have been. As I've said we're not arguing the point I'm simply bringing forth evidence and letting people consider.

**RS:** *Thank you Allan.*